

Appeal to the European Parliament

“The Union’s aim is to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples.” (Art. 3, Treaty of Lisbon)

Save the European peace project!

For peace. For human rights. For Europe.

The European integration reconciled enemies after the Second World War, making the European Union a model peace project the world over.

Now more than ever, we need a European Union that advocates peace and human rights – at home and beyond its borders.

However, beginning in 2021, the EU plans to invest billions of euros in the European arms industry, joint military operations and even more border security. Peacebuilding and human rights could fall victim to the defence against migration and flight.

We firmly believe that the European Union will only win the hearts of its citizens as a peace project, not as a military power.

Therefore, we call on the delegates of the European Parliament to:

Stand up for a European Union that advocates peace and human rights unconditionally.

- Campaign for a European Union that adheres to the European peace project instead of becoming a military power.

We urge the European Union to build on its strengths as a mediator in conflicts and as an alliance for peace through cooperation and collaboration. We oppose the European defence fund to finance the development of armament projects. The Treaty of Lisbon prohibits the financing of armament projects and military operations through the Community budget of the European Union. Delegates of the European Parliament should defend and strengthen these principles.

- Do not let the European Union provide arms to states that wage war or violate human rights to ward off refugees and migration.

We call on the European Union and its Member States not to use funds for the armament of armies and militias of non-member countries. The European Parliament must ensure the strict adherence to and further tightening of the European criteria for arms exports vis-à-vis the governments of the European Union Member States.

- Increase the funds of the European Union for the promotion of non-violent conflict transformation and human rights.

We request €7 bn. for non-violent conflict transformation and peacebuilding and €3 bn. for the promotion of human rights and democracy in the next EU financial framework (2021-2027).

Why is it important? Background & arguments

In 2019, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union will negotiate the next Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021 to 2027. The outcome will significantly impact European politics in the next few years.

There is reason to fear that the Parliament and the Member States of the European Union will submit to the pressures of right-wing populist movements and therefore invest even more in border fortifications and military security policy: new multi-billion euro expenditures on common defence projects, more joint military operations and the expansion of border security are planned as of 2021.

The promotion of peace and human rights is in danger of being limited and instrumentalised to control migration. The European Commission's draft for the financial framework, dated June 2018, earmarks just €1 bn. instead of the previous €2.3 bn. for non-violent conflict transformation.¹

Why the European Union should not become a military power.

The new European defence fund has a proposed budget of €13 bn. for armaments research and the development of new arms systems. In addition, €6.5 bn. are intended for military mobility, especially for the quick redeployment of troops within Europe. Funding the European defence fund out of the common budget of the EU would bid a final farewell to the European Union as a civil peace project.

The future Community budget would invest ten times as much in armaments than in peacebuilding. There is reason to fear that the fund's multi-billion euro subsidisation of the arms industry will result in even more arms exports from Europe.

The European defence fund violates the Treaty of Lisbon.² The Treaty prohibits the use of the Community budget of the European Union for the financing of armament projects and military operations.

Why the European Union and its Member States should not provide arms to countries that wage war or disregard human rights.

The next Multiannual Financial Framework of the European Union and a new off-budget "European Peace Facility" are designed to fund EU joint military operations and the armament of armed forces in war zones and conflict areas, for example to deter migration.³ These funding instruments would undermine the European Union's own regulations regarding arms exports.⁴

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/neighbourhood-and-world_en

² https://www.euractiv.com/section/defence-and-security/news/european-defence-fund-could-be-breaching-european-treaties-legal-opinion-says/?_ga=2.78489108.100432321.1545307984-1117620221.1532696019

³ [Euractiv.com \(2018\)—New EU 'Peace fund' could buy weapons for Africa.](https://www.euractiv.com/2018/09/12/new-eu-peace-fund-could-buy-weapons-for-africa/)

⁴ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+TA+P8-TA-2018-0451+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN>

The European Court of Auditors⁵ criticised programs that provide arms to the militaries of partner countries, for example in Mali or Niger, would show no sustainable results. The publishers of the German peace report 2018⁶ warned these programs would pose considerable risks to human rights. They could lead to greater violence rather than curbing it.

Why the European Union should increase support for non-violent conflict transformation and human rights in the future.

The European Union is one of the world's most important financial supporters of non-violent conflict transformation and human rights.⁷ Many civil society organisations for peace and human rights depend on this support more than ever. The number of violent conflicts has increased in recent years, while human rights and human rights defenders have come under pressure in many countries.

The relevance and effectiveness of the EU's Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace⁸ as well as the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights⁹ were only verified in 2017.

The European Union should not take part in the global armament spiral but pursue its most important goal: “to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples.”

⁵ [European Court of Auditors \(2018\) Special report No 20/2018: The African Peace and Security Architecture: need to refocus EU support.](#)

⁶ <https://www.friedensgutachten.de/en>

⁷ [ECDPM \(2018\): Supporting Peacebuilding in times of change.](#)

⁸ [Information on the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace, including evaluation reports.](#)

⁹ [Information on the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights by the European Commission.](#)

Signatories

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Church and Peace

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Forum Ziviler Friedensdienst / Forum Civil Peace Service (forumZFD)

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